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JOSEPH ROBINETTE BIDEN JR TO HIT THE GROUND RUNNING

On Day One of his administration today, president-elect Joe Biden plans to reverse Trump's harsh immigration policy

8-YR PATH TO CITIZENSHIP FOR IMMIGRANTS

On Wednesday, Biden is expected to unveil a sweeping immigration bill to provide an eight-year path to citizenship for 11 million illegal immigrants. The bill offers a 5-year path to temporary legal status to those living in the US without it. Thereafter, it will be a 3-year path to naturalisation. Biden may also end the ban on arrivals from several Muslim countries

DON TO MISS EVENT, OBAMA TO ATTEND

- Biden's inauguration will take place on the West Front of the US Capitol around 10.30 pm IST. There won't be crowds as the National Mall and Washington Monument are closed due to security threat
- Former presidents Barack Obama, George Bush and Bill Clinton will attend the event, but Donald Trump will give it a miss |P12

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INDIAN AMERICANS IN BIDEN ADMIN, 17 IN WHITE HOUSE, 13 ARE WOMEN

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TRICHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • WARANGAL • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

GABBACADABRA!

Unlikely heroes defy odds, help battered and bruised India snatch a magical series win at the deadliest of Aussie venues

NEWCOMERS, YET SHOWSTOPPERS

SHUBMAN GILL
Matches 3, Runs 259
Has taken to Test cricket like duck to water. Those back-foot punches, cuts have already won him quite a few admirers. Scored two valuable fifties and it was his 91 that set the tone for India's chase

MOHAMMED SIRAJ
Matches 3, Wickets 13
Find of the tour as far as bowling department goes. Led the attack in the absence of seniors and emerged as India's highest wicket-taker

NAVDEEP SAINI
Matches 2, Wickets 4
A tear-away quick, who India will hear a lot in the coming years. Though he didn't quite make an impact like Siraj, he complimented the attack with crucial breakthroughs

WASHINGTON SUNDAR
Mat 1, Wickets 4, Runs 84
Be it with the ball or with the bat, he didn't show any nerves. His 62 in the first innings kept India in the Test and his final assault on Pat Cummins broke Aussie hopes

T NATARAJAN
Matches 1, Wickets 3
The tour that has made Natarajan a household name beyond Tamil Nadu. Picked as a net bowler, he ended up making debut in all three formats. Here to stay in limited-overs

SHARDUL THAKUR
Mat 1, Wickets 7, Runs 69
It wasn't his debut, but it felt like one as his first Test in 2018 was all of 10 deliveries. His 67 in the first innings was priceless. Also chipped in with 4 wickets in the second

Rishabh Pant (centre) scored an unbeaten 89 to guide India to their second successive Test series win in Australia at the Gabba in Brisbane | AFP

SESSION BY SESSION

STEADY START
Chasing 328, India's plan for Day 5 was simple. Play the entire day was the message. Though they lost Rohit Sharma early, Shubman Gill and Cheteshwar Pujara steadied the ship

CONSOLIDATING THE POSITION
When the post-lunch session began, India still had plenty to do. While Gill cut loose, Pujara did his thing. Josh Hazlewood and Pat Cummins repeatedly tested Pujara, who took blows to his fingers, head, hip, but he stood like a rock. India lost Gill and Ajinkya Rahane in the session

BREACHING THE FORTRESS
Final session of the Tests are not for faint-hearted. Especially if you have the exuberance of Rishabh Pant. After Pujara's dismissal, Pant took charge. In the company of Mayank Agarwal, Washington Sundar and Shardul Thakur, Pant handed Australia their first Test match defeat at the Gabba since 1988

SWAROOP SWAMINATHAN @Chennai

FOR one last time, as the clock struck 4.30am on Tuesday morning, the broadcaster opened the last day's preview show with '*Come See The Wonder, Come See The Wonder*'. As it was the theme song for the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, it was a constant presence during the last month. During breaks, post match, before the toss... On Tuesday, when it filled the dimly-lit houses across the country, nobody would have had an inkling of the wonder that was about to follow.

Chasing 328 at the Gabba where an opposition team (West Indies) last won in 1988, nobody gave them a sniff. Yet, in what will go down as one of the greatest fourth-innings chases of all time, India got there with about 18 balls to spare. After two months of multiple hard quarantines, suffering racial abuse, losing men like they were on a battlefield and getting bowled out for 36 among other things, they pushed and pulled together as a collective unit for one final dash. It's why coach Ravi Shastri called this as one of India's greatest tours.

That it came down to the final day only added to the theatre, with Shubman Gill and Rishabh Pant, the embodiment of new India, finding an unshakeable ally in Cheteshwar Pujara, the charm of old. Even if this team has spoken a lot about intent, the plan on Tuesday wasn't to actively look for the target or defend. The dressing room message was simple: play normal cricket and see where it takes you.

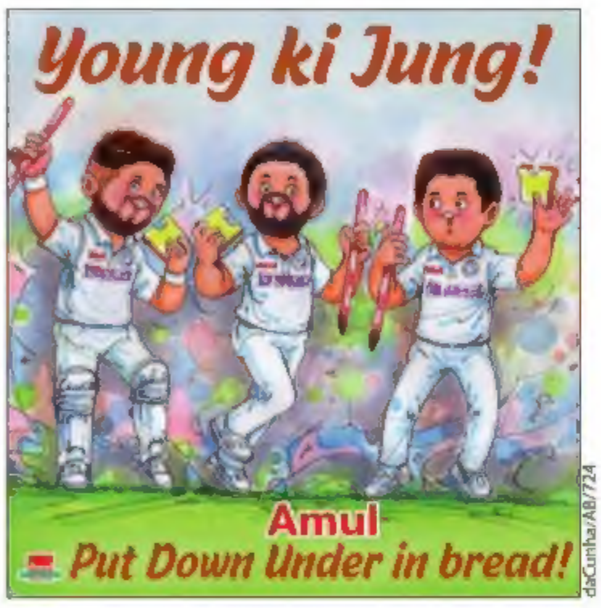
But the above-mentioned three guys did not play 'normal cricket'. While Pujara copped blow after blow but stood his ground, Gill, free of baggage and fearless in approach, took it on. The runs flowed. By now, pretty much the whole country were living their dreams, hour by hour, session by session.

One thing that this new team excel at is their tunnel vision. For example, Mohammed Siraj mourned the loss of his father while in quarantine. That he was India's highest wicket-taker is a reflection of this ethos. They are outspoken, too. Coming from a farming background, Gill's Instagram stories about the farmers' protest is bold. Like that pull off Mitchell Starc. Or that drive off Pat Cummins. Siraj, for his part, called out racist abuse.

Another cricketer who is bold is Pant. He is so bold, he doesn't care what you think of him. A maverick in every sense, he wasn't even told what to do by the team management. They prefer to leave him alone. The team only realised that he had planned to go after the target when he started looking up at the scoreboard in the final session. Plan is something, execution is another. But he has the conviction and self belief. If that 97 in Sydney was an entree, this unbeaten 89 was the dessert. The clue to his innings lay in his acceleration. Before Pujara's dismissal, he had scored 34 off 84. After Pujara went, he scored 55 off 54. That's what he can do. Chasing down lost causes when a draw would have sufficed to keep the Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

Another sign of this new attitude. Cast your mind back to 2011 when MS Dhoni shook hands and opted for a draw when they needed 86 runs from 15 overs with seven wickets in hand against West Indies. India were leading the series 1-0. This team though? None of that.

More than a hour after the celebrations, the broadcaster, for one last time, said goodbye. '*Come See The Wonder*' started playing. P17



SC committe to meet farmers on Thursday

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @New Delhi

THE Supreme Court-appointed committee on the new farm laws held its first meeting on Tuesday and said it will meet farmer leaders and other stakeholders on Thursday, a day after talks between the farmers and the Centre.

Panel member Anil Ghanwat said both physical and virtual meeting facilities would be available. "The biggest challenge is to convince the agitating farmers to come and speak with us. We will try our level best," he said.

"We will meet all stakeholders, including corporates, to understand their view points. We will reach out to everyone who is concerned about the farm laws," said a member.

The SC had on January 11 stayed the implementation of the new laws and formed a four-member panel comprising Ashok Gulati, Anil Ghanwat, Bhupinder Singh Mann and Pramod Joshi. Shortly thereafter, Mann recused himself after the panel drew flak as all four are known supporters of the three laws. While protesting farmers have already refused to meet the panel, one of its members said, "problems can be only resolved through dialogue. Farmers' organisations should meet us. We will try our best to resolve the issue."

In a different case in the SC, Chief Justice of India S A Bobde remarked that a person will not be disqualified from being a member of a committee merely because he/she has previously expressed an opinion on the subject matter under consideration. P9

State Budget in March first week, says CM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Udupi

CHIEF Minister B S Yediyurappa on Tuesday said that he is looking to present the State Budget in the first week of March. Till such time, he will assess the financial situation depending on which, allocations will be made under different heads. Speaking to reporters in Kundapur, the CM said that timely and bountiful rains in the state have helped the farming community reap richer harvest.

"The Legislative Assembly session will start from January 28 and we will discuss how the budgetary allocations can be made this time, given the financial constraints due to the Covid-19 pandemic. But a budget acceptable to all will be presented after a thorough study," he stressed.

The CM, who hold the Finance portfolio, will start holding a series of consultative meetings with the various departments as well as trade and industry bodies over the next few weeks before giving final shape to the budget.

The CM had earlier indicated that there could be a deficit of Rs 40,000-50,000 crore in the budget due to the pandemic and natural disasters like floods and drought. He had also expressed concern over not being able to take up development works on expected lines.

While the government is making all efforts to bring the economy back on track, and also wooing foreign investors to generate employment opportunities, it has also sought central assistance of Rs 5,495 crore, as recommended by the 15th Finance Commission, to tide over the current financial crisis.

Regarding allocation of portfolios to the newly-inducted ministers, Yediyurappa said that it will be done within two days after holding discussions. When asked about disgruntled BJP MLA Renukacharya visiting party leaders in Delhi to vent his ire, the CM told reporters that he has already spoken to the lawmaker and any differences will be sorted out.

Amid all the political wrangling arising out of the cabinet expansion, Yediyurappa is in the coastal town on a temple-hopping spree. His visits, planned right in the middle of the present turmoil, has generated both curiosity and attention.

We will discuss how the budgetary allocations can be made this time, given the financial constraints due to the pandemic. But a budget acceptable to all will be presented after a thorough study

B S Yediyurappa, Chief Minister

DISTINCTION

TOP VIROLOGIST FROM B'LURU ON SPUTNIK ADVISORY BOARD

CHETANA BELAGERE @Bengaluru

BENGALURU'S renowned virologist **Dr V Ravi**, popular as 'Virus Ravi' for his achievements in the field of virology research, is one of the leading scientists on the International Scientific Advisory Board for Sputnik-V — the world's first registered vaccine against SARS-CoV-2.

Dr Ravi, a member of Karnataka's Covid Advisory Committee, formerly headed the neurovirology department at the National Institute Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS), Bengaluru. He was one of the first doctors to get the shot in Karnataka when the country-wide vaccination drive against Covid-19 began on January 16.

"I have consented to be part of the board announced by the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF), Russia's sovereign wealth fund, and the National Research Centre for Epidemiology and Microbiology (Gamaleya Centre)," Dr Ravi told *TNIE*.

The board has leading scientists in virology, microbiology, genetics and biotechnology from Argentina, Croatia, France, Germany, India, Russia, Sweden, the UK and the USA, representing top research and medical centres. CONTINUED ON: P3

EXPRESS READ

15 crushed to death by truck in Gujarat

Surat: Fourteen labourers and a one-year-old girl were killed when a dumper truck ran over them as they were sleeping by the roadside in Surat district of Gujarat on Tuesday. The truck driver apparently lost control over the vehicle after hitting a sugarcane-laden tractor and ran over the workers. P10

WhatsApp told to roll back changes

New Delhi: India has asked WhatsApp to withdraw the recent changes in its privacy policy, saying unilateral changes are unfair and unacceptable. The Centre asked the messaging app reconsider its approach to information privacy, freedom of choice and data security. P13

PM meets Cardinals, positive on Pope invite

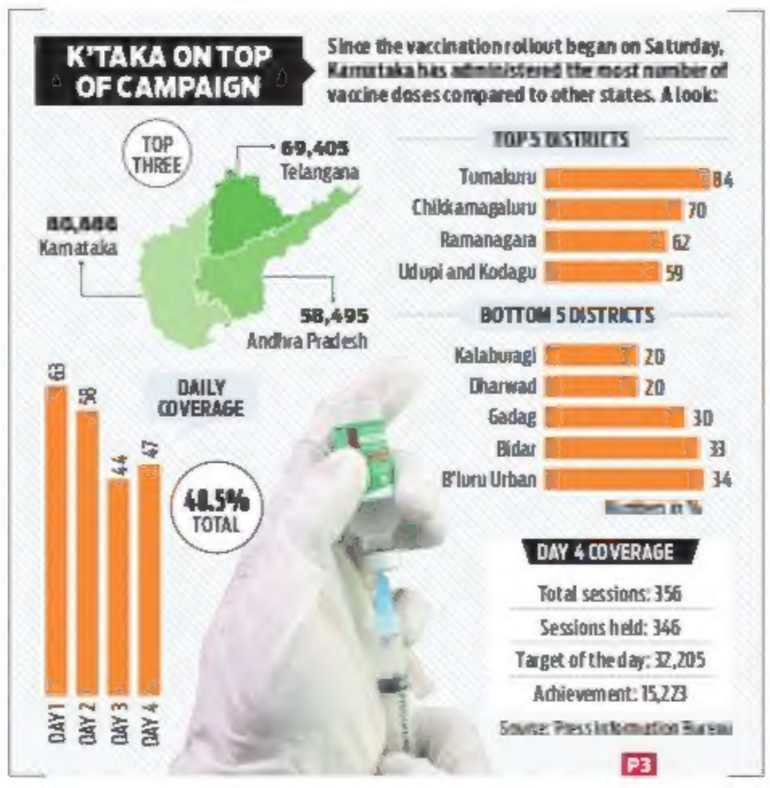
EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kochi

THREE cardinals of the Catholic Church met Prime Minister Narendra Modi at his office in Delhi on Tuesday and expressed the grievances of the Christian community. They also placed a request to invite Pope Francis to the country to which the PM responded positively.

Syro-Malankara Church Thiruvananthapuram Major Archbishop Baselios Cleemis Catholicos, Bombay Archbishop Cardinal Oswald Gracias and Syro-Malabar Major Archbishop Mar George Alencherry raised the "discrimination in the allocation of minority welfare fund" and the demarcation of the Western Ghats' buffer zones, among other issues.

Though the church heads requested the release of Fr Stan Swamy, arrested in connection with the Bhima-Koregaon case, Modi is learnt to have told them it was a legal issue. "There was no political significance to the meeting. The PM lauded the services of the Church in the fields of education, social development and health," said Cardinal Gracias.

Mizoram Governor and former BJP state president P S Sreedharan Pillai facilitated the meeting, but he could not attend it as he has quarantined himself after his wife tested positive for Covid-19.



Bengaluru to host top RSS body meeting in March

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

KARNATAKA, which has managed the Covid-19 situation quite well, will play host to the Akhil Bharatiya Pratinidhi Sabha (ABPS), the highest decision-making body of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), in March. The meeting was earlier planned to be held in Nagpur, Maharasthra.

With the neigbouring state witnessing a high number of Covid-positive cases every day, there was apprehension that the government there could restrict number of people assembling in one place.

Top RSS functionaries will now descend on Bengaluru for a two-day brainstorming session from March 19, which will be held at the Janaseva Vidya Kendra, Channenahalli, located on Magadi Road.

In 2020, the meeting was originally scheduled to be held in Bengaluru from March 15 to 17 and around 1,400 members were expected to attend. But it was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Now, with the state witnessing a decline in Covid-19 cases, it was again chosen to host the annual event.

There is speculation that the election to the top executive post of RSS, the Sarkaryavah (General Secretary), will also take place during the two-day meeting. The election is conducted once in three years. CONTINUED ON: P5